

A New Species of *Phaleria* from the Gulf Coast of Alabama (Coleop.: Tenebrionidae).

By FRANK E. BLAISDELL, Sr., Stanford Medical School and California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California.

The species belonging to the Tenebrionid genus *Phaleria* Latr., inhabit the sea-beaches of both the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts. The species described below is a new and interesting addition to those already known:

***Phaleria lodingi*, new species.**

Form oval, depressed, narrowing very moderately anteriorly and posteriorly to appear slightly subfusiform, about twice as long as wide. Color pale testaceous, except eyes and tips of mandibles which are black, head sometimes suffused with piceous. Pubescence minute, extremely sparse and inconspicuous. Surface microscopically reticulo-granulate, luster dull and the integuments thin and subdiaphanous.

Head about as wide as long, scarcely as wide as the pronotal apex, widest across the eyes, canthi not in the least prominent; sides before the eyes very feebly arcuate and convergent anteriorly, slightly and broadly sinuate at the oblique sutures, the latter feebly indicated and blackish; epistomal apex slightly arcuato-truncate, angles narrowly rounded; frons scarcely convex, extremely feebly and broadly impressed from side to side before the eyes, frontal suture obsolete, finely, very sparsely punctate, punctures more distinct than elsewhere. Labrum short and transverse, apex feebly arcuate, more strongly so laterally, sparsely and obsoletely punctate. Eyes large, transverse, moderately prominent and convex, rather coarsely faceted, emarginate at the anterior canthi, narrowly separated beneath. Antennae short, equal to the length of the pronotum at middle, not quite attaining the posterior third; joints two to five inclusive quite equal in width, second a little longer than wide, third obconical and about twice as long as wide, fourth and fifth subequal and about as long as wide; joints six to eleven inclusive incrassate, forming a six-jointed moderately compressed club; joints seven to ten equal in length and width, transversely oval, sixth slightly smaller, eleventh as long as wide, subovate, feebly narrowed apically, apex arcuate, equal to the tenth in width.

Pronotum at base about twice as wide as long and twice as wide as the head, transverse; apex evenly, not deeply, broadly emarginate between the obtuse angles; sides convergent from base to apex and feebly arcuate; base broadly arcuate and three-fourths wider than the apex, angles nearly rectangular and narrowly rounded; disk feebly and evenly convex, sparsely and

obsoletely punctulate, basal impressions feeble and punctiform to slightly elongate.

Elytra widest at middle, a little more than three times as long as the pronotum, a third longer than wide; sides broadly arcuate and continuing the line of the pronotal sides, obtusely rounded at apex, sutural angles obliquely rounded; base adapted to but not wider than the pronotal base, broadly and arcuately emarginate, humeri not in the least prominent or tumid; disk evenly and very moderately convex, with striae of small, feeble and unimpressed punctures that become obsolete in apical third, where the striae are stronger, slightly impressed and the intervals feebly convex, best observed under oblique illumination, interstrial spaces quite impunctulate. Scutellum small, equilaterally triangular and impunctate.

Under surface of the body glabrous and for the most part obsoletely punctulate; metasternum and abdomen very sparsely and feebly punctulate, punctules slightly larger on the fifth ventral segment; second and third segments subequal in length, fourth a little shorter. Prosternal process horizontal, smooth, obtusely narrowed apically and vertical posteriorly. Prosternum with a small, more or less distinct, shallow rounded pit at middle a short distance from the base of the process, at times evanescent.

Legs slender, femora not in the least inflated, flattened, protibiae moderately broadly and gradually dilated apically, triangulo-clavate in outline and briefly arcuate at base; meso- and metatibiae straight, widening but slightly toward apex; protarsi short and slightly stout, joints one to four subequal in length and width, the terminal quite equal in length to the preceding four; meso- and metatarsi long and slender, the latter about eight-ninths as long as their tibia. Abdominal segments differing in length in the sexes.

Male: A little narrower, fourth abdominal segment four-fifths as long as the third and two-thirds as long as the second.

Female: Broader. Fourth segment one-half the length of the second and about three-fifths as long as the third.

Measurements: (Types) Length 5-5.5 mm.; width 2.3-2.8 mm.

Holotype, male, No. 2954, and *allotype*, female, No. 2955, in the author's collection, Museum of the California Academy of Sciences. Collected by H. P. Löding, on the Gulf Beach at Mobile, ALABAMA. I take much pleasure in naming it after Mr. Löding.

Fourteen specimens studied, ten of which are *paratypes* distributed as follows: Four in each of the Author's, U. S.

National Museum and Mr. Löding's collections; two in that of Henry Dietrich of Lucedale, Mississippi.

The habitat of the species appears to be local as Mr. Löding states that he has taken it in but one place and always under or in the vicinity of dead fish.

Lodingi is more closely related to *gracilipes* Casey than to any other species. Specimens have been very carefully compared with the type of *gracilipes* by Drs. Buchanan and Chapin of the National Museum.

Dr. Buchanan states concerning *gracilipes* Casey: "It is a little shorter and relatively narrower, is darker brown, more shiny and less distinctly alutaceous than *lodingi*; the punctulation of pronotum, elytral intervals and venter is a little heavier. Regarding *lodingi* the paler color, more strongly developed alutaceous surface texture, duller luster and feebler punctulation may be in part due to immaturity. In *lodingi* the prosternum in front of coxae has a small pit or large puncture which is lacking in *gracilipes*. The prothorax of *lodingi* is a little broader relative to the length, and has sides slightly less arcuate than in *gracilipes*."

Dr. Chapin remarks: "I am not certain whether I would call the two the same species. There is a difference in locality that may or may not be significant. Löding tells me that he finds these at but one place; that would indicate that the species is rather narrowly limited. So much for the side that the two are not the same. Against this, we have only the single type specimen of Casey's species. There is no way to tell how much his species varies. Perhaps they are the same—I really doubt it."

According to Col. Casey's remarks *gracilipes* is very narrow, smallest and by far the most slender species with elongate metasternum, allied only to *debilis* Lec. The type of *gracilipes* measures 4.5 mm. in length and 1.9 mm. in width, and was collected by Mr. W. Julich in Texas, (supposedly on the sea beach, although not so stated).

In closing Mr. Löding says that "the pale color of *lodingi* is not due to immaturity, as all of the specimens that he has collected have been of the same color." It belongs to the group of species in which the margins of the thorax and elytra are not fimbriate.